

TEAMALPHA newsletter



Welcome to the second issue of the TEAMALPHA Newsletter.

TeamAlpha are a group of academics, doctoral students and post-doctoral researchers associated with the 'Co-producing Alcohol, Criminal Justice and Public Health Research' theme of the Centre for Social Innovation in SSSH @ Teesside University

At the heart of the work that TEAMALPHA do is co-production with stakeholders and the community.

The team consists of academics and postdoctoral students primarily in SSSH with representation across the University. The ethos of the team is support and working together to achieve results. We work with stakeholders locally, nationally and internationally. There are currently 36 members of the team, of which 17 members are currently studying as doctoral researchers.

As we have all had a difficult year, it was decided amongst the Team that this issue of our Newsletter should be a celebration of the work of our PhD. Researchers, with students providing information on the 'trials and tribulations' of life as a PhD. student.

Something good that has happened during your study (Does not have to be study related)?

1 "I have not only leapt into the PhD world but also the world of motherhood. I am expecting a little boy in June and could not be more excited to welcome him into the world, to bring him up, and make him call me Dr Ashley Bloxham any time he wants something, lol." - Ashley

2. "Thoroughly familiar with the visa process, flight routes, and administrative procedures in the UK haha!!" – Srinidhi

3. "Working with Professor Newbury-Birch, I have developed a healthy habit of recording my reading and research insights into a reflection log. This has also been shared more widely with schools and some fellow PhD researchers nationally." – Sean

4. "Making connections and friendships outside of my profession and academic role as an SL. The support and friendship within Team Alpha has been immense, especially during these challenging times." – Chris



Students talked openly about their experiences both: good and challenging:

Most interesting or positive thing about your PhD?

1. "Someday (and hopefully), my work will positively affect the health and well-being of adolescents and their offspring." – Srinidhi
2. "Helping women in prison in even the smallest way is worthwhile." – Jennifer
3. "Challenging existing theory and exploring and hopefully discovering new ways of working with heroin using and offending populations." – Cliff
4. "I am gaining new skills and realising that I have many transferable skills, drawing on my past work experiences." – Donna



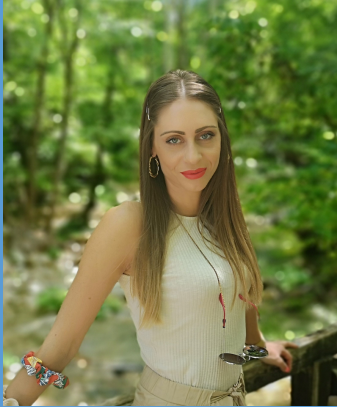
Something you have learned from your PhD so far, which you did not know before.

1. "Discovering that the heroin using population in Teesside is almost 4x greater than in County Durham, despite the entire population for each area being very similar. This influenced the decision on where I will be conducting my research." - Cliff
2. "Although my PhD has given me a wealth of knowledge on issues related to my area of studies and research experience, I would say that the most important thing for me is that my PhD is a journey of self-awareness. It really helped me realise aspects of myself and understand better my own character, motives, needs and desires." - Evdoxia
3. "One frappuccino at Starbucks costs more than the median income for people in the developing world." - Sean
4. "I have learned that there is a huge gap in the research regarding working therapeutically with veterans diagnosed with alcohol use disorder and post-traumatic stress disorder, which I intend to address with my research." – Ashley



While 2020 may go down as the year that never was TEAMALPHA appear to have weathered the storm reasonably well, providing support to one another throughout this difficult period. We provide several WhatsApp groups for general support and support with specific tasks. We have also provided tutorials to students and considering the difficulties we have faced, we feel it's fair to say that we've had a blast and all came out the other end intact.





How have you coped during COVID-19 (positives/negatives)?

1. "Covid affected my PhD research itself as mentioned but not in a huge way. It did however mean I had to homeschool two children alongside completing my final year and that has been a challenge like no other. Having Team Alpha at the other end of a Whatsapp group has saved me a few times from throwing the towel in." – Jennifer
2. "I am very lucky to have excellent support systems, both personally and professionally, that I can tap into at anytime when I am starting to feel overwhelmed. I think it is extremely important not to bottle things up and talk about things when you need to. Often, the act of talking and getting your issues "out there" in the universe is a massive help in making you feel less anxious." - Parisa
3. "Personally, it was all about implementing self-care and giving or receiving support from others. It was (and still is) a very stressful and pressing period of time for everyone, so, I found that it is truly significant to be able to show kindness to others and ourselves." – Evdoxia
4. "I have realised perfection doesn't exist and to accept support when things are not going so well and be there to support others when they are needed. To celebrate every small achievement. Go for walks, take breaks, spend time doing what you enjoy and except you cannot be everything to everyone." – Donna

And finally, some 'soundbites' of advice for all of you aspiring PhD. Students out there. We hope that this has given you some food for thought and we look forward to meeting up with some of you in the future:

What advice would you give to other prospective/ fellow students?

1. "Expect your question to change and learn to relax into that. Take a note book to bed so you can empty your thoughts and get back to sleep. Ask all the stupid questions. And most importantly, get a supportive supervisor." - Lisa
2. "Based on my experience, it is not just academic ability that is essential when working on a PhD. To be a successful PhD researcher, one must be resilient, committed, dedicated, determined, confident, adaptable, positive, and flexible." – Abi
3. "Take the leap; there is a lovely and supportive team to welcome you once you do." – Ashley
4. "Choose a topic you are passionate about. There will still be times you want to give up, but if you are passionate about the research it will keep you going. It also simply makes it more enjoyable." – Jennifer

As we say goodbye to 'the year that never was', we thought we would leave you with a moment of lightheartedness, with our students sharing their 'desert island discs' along with a book and a luxury item they would take with them if stranded. We hope you enjoy

TeamAlpha PhDs' Desert Island Discs, books and luxury items

Abi: Perfect in Your Ways – Rhoda Akintola @ <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=S4f-niU1Jx4>

Book: The Bible, Luxury Item: C.D Player

Ashley: Oasis – Don't Look Back in Anger @ <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=cmpRLQZkTb8>

Book: The Harry Potter Collection by J.K Rowling, Luxury Item: Her Dog

Chris: Guns and Roses – Welcome to the Jungle @ <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=o1tj2zJ2Wvg>

Book: Bobby Robson Autobiography, Luxury Item: A Luxury Yacht

Cliff: Going Back to My Roots – Richie Havens @ <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=puDtxG9FBLQ>

Book: War and Peace by Leo Tolstoy, Luxury Item: Sunglasses and Flip-Flops

Donna: Pink – Conversations With My 13 Year Old Self @

https://www.youtube.com/results?search_query=13+year+old+self+pink+lyrics

Book: The Island by Victoria Heslop, Luxury Item – Chocolate

Evdoxia: Imagine – John Lennon @ <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=L6svOHFSAH8>

Book: Becoming Myself by Irvin Yalom, Luxury Item: Paper and pencil

Jen: Lonestar – Amazed @ <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=x-skFgrV59A>

Book: Guess How Much I Love You by Sam McBratney , Luxury Item: Eye Mask

Lisa: Bauhaus – Third Uncle @ <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=sILbx5xbwPY>

Book: Prisoner of Azkaban –by J.K Rowling, Luxury Item: Her Dog.

Lottie: You Are the Reason – Calum Scott @ <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=207X6DTY4LY>

Book: Order of the Phoenix –by J.K Rowling, Luxury Item: Wife or Summer Fruit Squash.

Parisa: Arctic Monkeys – R U Mine @ <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=VQH8ZTgna3Q>

Book: Misery by Stephen King, Luxury Item: Olaplex.

Sean: Amazing Grace (Various Artists) For it's history, meaning and purpose @

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=u4qbmPpfG6s>

Book: True Grit by Bear Grylls, Luxury Item: GPS Walking Kit

Srinidhi: Sunrise in the Desert – Michael Whalen @ <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=dXrZ8c42obQ>

Book: Safe Haven by Nicholas Sparks, Luxury Item: Spectacles

PhD. Research Topics: Listed below are the research topics of our PhD. Researchers. If you are interested in any of the topics and would like to contact the researcher, then please feel free to do so through the email details provided.

Researcher	Research Topic	Yr. of Study	Email
A.Akintola	The role of embedded research in co-producing public health knowledge in non-clinical settings to bridge the gap between research evidence and its implementation in public health practice.	Final year/ FT	A.Akintola@tees.ac.uk
Ashley Bloxham	A Military Operation to Combat Dual Mental Health Disorders Amongst Veterans	First year/PT	ashley.bloxham@outlook.com
Chris Moat	A mixed methods study examining the feasibility of carrying out alcohol screening and brief interventions by Paramedics, in the pre-hospital environment,	Third year/PT	c.moat@tees.ac.uk
Cliff Johnson	An Exploration of the Common Aetiology of the Drugs/Crime Nexus: A mixed methods study of a heroin using population through a psychoanalytic lens	Third year/PT	Clifford.johnson@tees.ac.uk
Donna Piper	Co-production and brief interventions for Cannabis use with teenagers	Part Time	D.Piper@tees.ac.uk
Evdoxia Chatzimladi	Using a co-production approach with young people aged 15-16 who have previously been involved with the Criminal Justice System in England to make recommendations for an app for gaining consent in research studies.	Second year/PT	E.Chatzimladi@tees.ac.uk
Jennifer Ferguson	An exploration of the acceptability and feasibility of delivering screening and brief alcohol interventions to women in an open prison setting	Final year/FT	Jennifer.Ferguson@tees.ac.uk
Lisa Etherson	Shame, relational trauma and compulsive sexual behaviour in adult males – an explorative study	Third year/PT	L.Etherson@tees.ac.uk
Lottie Sim-Norris	Designing a Trauma Informed Intervention for Male Sex Offenders with a Learning Disability	Second year/PT	C.Sim-Norris@tees.ac.uk
Parisa Diba	The Dark Side of Enhancement: An Examination of Crime and Harm in Offline and Online Image-Enhancement Markets	First year/FT	P.Diba@tees.ac.uk
Sean Harris	Doorstep disadvantage: teaching and leading with poverty in mind and in our schools	First year/PT	Sean.Harris@tees.ac.uk
Srinidhi Koya	Examining the relationship between alcohol consumption and unhealthy weight amongst adolescent girls in the UK	First year/FT	S.Koya@tees.ac.uk

Newsletter produced by Clifford Johnson, Srinidhi Koya and Dorothy Newbury-Birch